

Faith in Jesus

Mark 16:1-8

1. The Evidence of the Resurrection vs. 1-7

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome witnessed Jesus' death on the cross, burial in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb (15:40,47), witnessed an empty tomb, notified by an angel that Jesus has raised from the dead, and were reminded that Jesus had foretold that His resurrection would take place.

If a person truly looks for the historical evidence that proves Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, the evidence discovered will point to the gospels' account of Jesus being true.

2. The Encounter of the Lord vs. 8

Mark wrote this gospel to Christians who knew the true stories of Jesus but have become complacent. Mark ended his gospel before the women placed their faith in Jesus. Why? As a reminder that an encounter with the resurrected Lord, not the empty tomb, is what produces faith.

A person can find all the evidence needed to prove Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. However, it is only through God convicting us of the truth that we begin to have faith that Jesus is our Lord and Saviour.

Have we become complacent? Jesus fully gave Himself to us, are we fully giving ourselves to Jesus? Jesus is always faithful and fully committed.

Evidence in a Nutshell: Just a taste of some of the evidence one would discover

1. Jesus's Death and Burial

Contemporary historians, both Christian and non-Christian accept Jesus's death on the cross as a historical fact.

His death by crucifixion is the single fact most mentioned in all the historical records of his life, both Christian and non-Christian.

2. The Empty Tomb

The New Testament Gospels claim that the tomb of Jesus was found empty on the Sunday following His crucifixion.

Strongest piece of evidence: Being reported that it was discovered by women. Women were not seen as credible sources.

If the early Christians were inventing narratives to support their own version of events, why not ascribe the discovery of the tomb to witnesses who would have been received as more credible?

Example: the first-century Jewish historian Josephus claimed that Jewish law expressed the following sentiment regarding the reliability of women: “Let not the testimony of women be admitted, on account of the levity and boldness of their sex.”¹

3. Changed Lives

Every one of the Twelve had come from doubt to confidence, from confusion to conviction, from fear to faith. Ready to die for the truth.

Every one of these guys could have lived if they had said just one statement: “He is dead.” But they refused because they knew He was alive!

Reality: No one is willing to die for a lie. The Apostles were willing to die and were put to death, because Jesus is the risen Lord.

¹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, trans. William Whiston, 4.8.15, Project Gutenberg, August 9, 2017, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2848/2848-h/2848-h.htm>.